

LOSSES FROM FIRE TRIPLIED IN 1948

11 THEATRES DAMAGED BADLY IN 41 BLAZES OF ALL TYPES

While there were eight fewer theatre fires in Canada in 1948 than the 49 in 1947, these 41 more than tripled the property loss of the previous year, it was revealed in reports from government sources, which gave the damage as \$459,071 in 1948, as against \$151,077 the previous year.

Commercial Photogs Pan NFB Activity

The National Film Board ought to give up production of still photography, the maintenance of a negative library, the free distribution of prints and "the practice of sending camera crews from Ottawa to distant cities," the Royal Commission was told in a brief from the Ontario Society of Photographers.

The Society claimed the NFB has "gone far beyond the purposes for which it was designed" and wants it denied a larger budget and the status of a crown corporation on the grounds that it would have too much power.

However, again there were no fatalities in theatres, proving once more the value of staff training and preparedness in fire safety precautions. None of the fires which destroyed theatres occurred when any were open to the public.

There was a total of 53,048 fires in Canada in 1948 and property loss amounted to \$67,144,473, both setting new highs. The previous year there were 52,931 fires with damage adding up to

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Farrow To Direct

John Farrow has been borrowed from Paramount by RKO to direct *A White Rose for Julie*.

Miller Returned In Saskatchewan

Ratification of the resolutions of the Motion Picture Industry Council of Canada was unanimously endorsed, after some discussion, by the Saskatchewan Motion Picture Exhibitors Association at its recent annual meeting in Regina. This followed

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Short Strike On THC Houses

The management of the Casino Theatre in Toronto said that it was considering some procedure in view of the "unwarranted action" of Local 173 of the projectionists' union in calling a strike of boothmen and stagehands recently. One performance was

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Competition From USA Periodicals

The severe competition from United States magazines which Canadian publications face in this country was made known to the Royal Commission by the Periodical Press Association. This type of handicap is particularly true of the trade press in the Ca-

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Spencer Sues Re Kentville Fire

The F. G. Spencer Company Limited, Maritime circuit with headquarters in Saint John, NB, is suing the Irving Oil Company Limited in the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia for damages in connection with the fire which destroyed the Capitol Theatre,

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Variety Village Opened By Hon. Dana Porter

Greater than the traditional "Greatest Show On Earth" was the recent three-day spectacle of the Variety Club of Toronto; greater because it was real. Those three days began with the airport reception for Danny Kaye and ended with his effort at the Imperial Theatre benefit for Ontario's handicapped children. It was a spectacle made up exclusively of big scenes, every one as real as life. As each ended the participant or spectator was convinced that the next could not better it. Not until it was all over was a choice possible. That choice was one of the scenes that was staged on the

(Continued on Page 3)

'Peg Pioneers' Dance

Winnipeg branch of the Canadian Picture Pioneers will hold its sixth annual dinner and dance at the St. Charles on Dec. 5th.

NFB Hassle Heard In House Of Commons

Government investigation into the backgrounds of civil servants and other employees for security reasons came into public notice when an Opposition member of Parliament, quoting a story in *The Financial Post*, a Toronto publication,

directed a question to the Hon. Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence, about the National Film Board being screened for disloyal personnel.

Although three cabinet ministers emphasized that there was nothing about the NFB personnel check that differed from those being carried on in other government agencies where the

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NEWS OF THEATRE BUILDING

Only activity in current theatre building developments is in the drive-in field, with the announcement of two such theatres being planned.

In Stratford, Ontario, the city council has finally voted to sell ten acres of city-owned property to the Ochs Management Company for the erection of a 350-car, \$60,000 drive-in. Decision was made over the objection of Theatre Holding Corporation which operates Stratford's two standard theatres, the Avon and Classic.

Inland Industries Limited, a company comprised of businessmen of Kamloops, BC, will build a drive-in near that city. Work is to start immediately and is expected to be completed for an early Spring opening.

Theatre being built in Kitchener, Ontario, by Biltmore Theatres Limited is rapidly nearing completion. The new house is part of a \$1,000,000 structure which will also contain offices and stores.

Sets New Record

Saturday business of Warners' The Inspector General at the Imperial, Toronto, set a new record for the 3,373-seat house.

COOKE VS. CBC AT ROYAL COMM'N

Jack Kent Cooke, CKEY boss, called the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation "a subsidized and increasingly aggressive competitor" which "should not be the regulatory body with the power of life and death over private stations." Six other briefs took the same view.

ROSALIND RUSSELL RETURNS
TO COMEDY...
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Screen Play by Nat Perrin • Directed by **NORMAN FOSTER** • Produced by **BUDDY ADLER**

SPENCER VS. OIL CO.

(Continued from Page 1)

Kentville, NS, in February, 1948. Evidence is being heard in Kentville by Mr. Justice E. T. Parker and a total of 47 witnesses will be heard before the case is concluded.

Harry P. MacKeen, KC, Halifax, and A. Webster MacDonald, counsel for plaintiff are seeking to prove the fire was caused by alleged negligence of the defendant company in filling the tanks of the oil burning furnace. B. R. Wade, chief of Kentville fire department, was on the stand for ninety minutes and was still under cross-examination by Gilbert when court adjourned. In the chief's opinion, which was objected to by the defence, the fire started from oil in the furnace room. Under cross-examination witness said he could not say whether there were cracks in the cement base of the chimney in the furnace room. His Lordship and counsel viewed the ruins during the lunch hour and Gilbert said he could assure Wade that there were cracks in the chimney base.

Plaintiff's witnesses have given evidence concerning construction costs, weather conditions, discovery of the fire, delivery of oil some hours before the blaze, and the manner in which the fire was fought. Chief Wade said the first piece of apparatus was on the scene ninety seconds after the siren sounded.

James N. Kenney, Truro contractor, who built the theatre, said it was patterned after the one built for the F. G. Spencer Company in Truro, except that it had several adaptations including brick facing. The theatre in Amherst, later built, was the same as Kentville. Witness said the Capitol Theatre here was built in 1937 at a contract price of \$34,000. This did not include the seats, any of the furnishings, projection room, and other equipment, and electric wiring. Witness said that the same building in 1948 would have cost \$120,000. The theatre was of brick and interlocking tile construction 150 feet long by 55 wide and 40 feet high. Mr. Kennedy testified that the cost of the demolition work on the ruins cost \$6,294 and the salvage was \$600.

Jolson Honored By Washington Tent

Al Jolson was the guest of honor at a recent dinner in Washington given by that city's Variety tent at which he was presented with a plaque commemorating his being selected by the tent as the "show business personality of the year."

A sculptured bust of Jolson will be the first to be placed in the Variety tent's newly-created "Show Business Hall of Fame."

Variety Village Opened

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second day — the official opening of Variety Village.

Variety Village was opened on November 16th by the Hon. Dana H. Porter, Attorney-General and Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario. The ceremonies surrounding its opening attracted more press, radio and newsreel coverage than any event of its kind in Canadian history. Although International Chief Barker Bob O'Donnell could not be present, he wired his congratulations on the commencement of the first term in what is the continent's only vocational guidance school and residence for crippled children. Other showmen and well-wishers from different parts of the world made their feelings known through similar messages.

The events of the three days drew enough newspaper space to wipe out several forests, while enough photos were taken to fill a gallery. Hardly a person handy to a radio could have missed some information bearing on one or more of the events, so much of it was broadcast — unless that listener was deaf. Only royal visits have induced greater receptions. The fact is that international attention was attracted and reflected in press correspondence and newsreel exhibition.

The excitement promised by the advance publicity began to take place when Danny Kaye

arrived at Malton Airport from Chicago on the Danny Kaye Special. He was welcomed by Mayor McCallum of Toronto, a motorcade of Variety members with bannered cars, and the press, radio and newsreel corps. It had been raining when he arrived but, miraculously, it cleared up and stayed that way until the reception was over, then came down again.

The press and radio receptions at the Royal York and the Variety Club were more than just that; they were occasions. Then the next day a Variety motorcade paraded through the city to the City Hall, where it deposited Kaye to be welcomed again by the Mayor, Controller Lamport and thousands of cheering Torontonians.

After speaking to the crowd Kaye signed the City's guest book and, with the motorcade, headed for the Fiesta Room luncheon in his honor. There his speech made it an unforgettable occasion, for his address on tolerance and the work of Variety touched every heart and brought tears to many eyes.

From the luncheon the barkers of Tent 28, again led by Kaye, went to Variety Village, where more than a dozen speakers talked from the heart about it as the pupils listened. Kaye's remarks, addressed to them, were

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COUNCIL AWARDS FIRST 'FLAGPOLE'

A new award, "The Flagpole of the Month," has been announced by the USA Motion Picture Industry Council, the public relations organization established to defend the reputation of the film business. To be given to the person "who best rivals the traditional publicity-seeking flagpole sitter" by grabbing for headlines at Hollywood's expense, the Council has named Lady Astor as the first candidate for the award for certain comments she made about motion pictures recently.

Among other things Lady Astor said, "I think the world is being swept off its feet by Hollywood — nothing but wretched pictures of naked women and girls."

A special flagpole, sharpened to a needle point, will be presented to those in the film industry itself who obtain publicity by attacking Hollywood.

COMMAND SHOW DRAWS 2,200

Over 2,200 people paid from \$2.75 to \$67 to see the recent annual Command Performance in London. Thousands of others jammed the district to get a glimpse of the King and Queen and the two Princesses, who made up the Royal Party, and Greer Garson, Walter Pidgeon, Errol Flynn, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Rosalind Russell, Ann Sothorn, George Murphy, Gregory Peck, Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon.

Performance, proceeds of which go to the Cinema Trade Benevolent Fund, includes a stage show and a preview of a hit film, with American and British productions playing alternate years. MGM's *That Forsyte Woman* was this year's presentation and the stage show was a comedy version of the *Cinderella* story.

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LOSSES FROM FIRE

(Continued from Page 1)

\$57,050,461. Fatalities occurring in the 1948 blazes was 493, as compared with 390 deaths the year before.

Damage caused by smoker's carelessness totalled \$3,141,399 and that by overheated boilers, etc., \$4,912,283.

Early indications in 1948 pointed to a record being set in theatre fire losses for the year and the final total far exceeds those of any former year. Among the theatres destroyed or badly damaged were the Rex, Flin Flon, Manitoba; Gaiety, Leduc, Alberta; Rimouskois, Rimouski, Quebec; Vanguard, Vanguard, Saskatchewan; Capitol, Kentville, NS; Kent, Moncton, NB; Star, Lewisville, NB; Ritz, Saskatoon; Roxy, Coleman, Alberta; Carlsonia, Fort St. John, BC; and the Border, Rock Island, Quebec.

Only three of the above list were in the \$50,000-or-over bracket, according to the official report. These were the Kentville fire (\$145,645); the Coleman one (\$60,000); and the Flin Flon blaze (\$57,415).

In 1946 the damage to theatres caused by 39 fires was \$175,178, slightly higher than the 1947 figure and a great increase over the \$75,000 for 74 fires in 1944. One reason for the increase in damage is that there are more and more theatres going into operation, over 600 situations having been added from 1944 to 1948.

Buy Runyon Story

Benedict Bogeaus and Pat O'Brien have acquired screen rights to "The Damon Runyon Story" as a starring vehicle for Pat O'Brien.

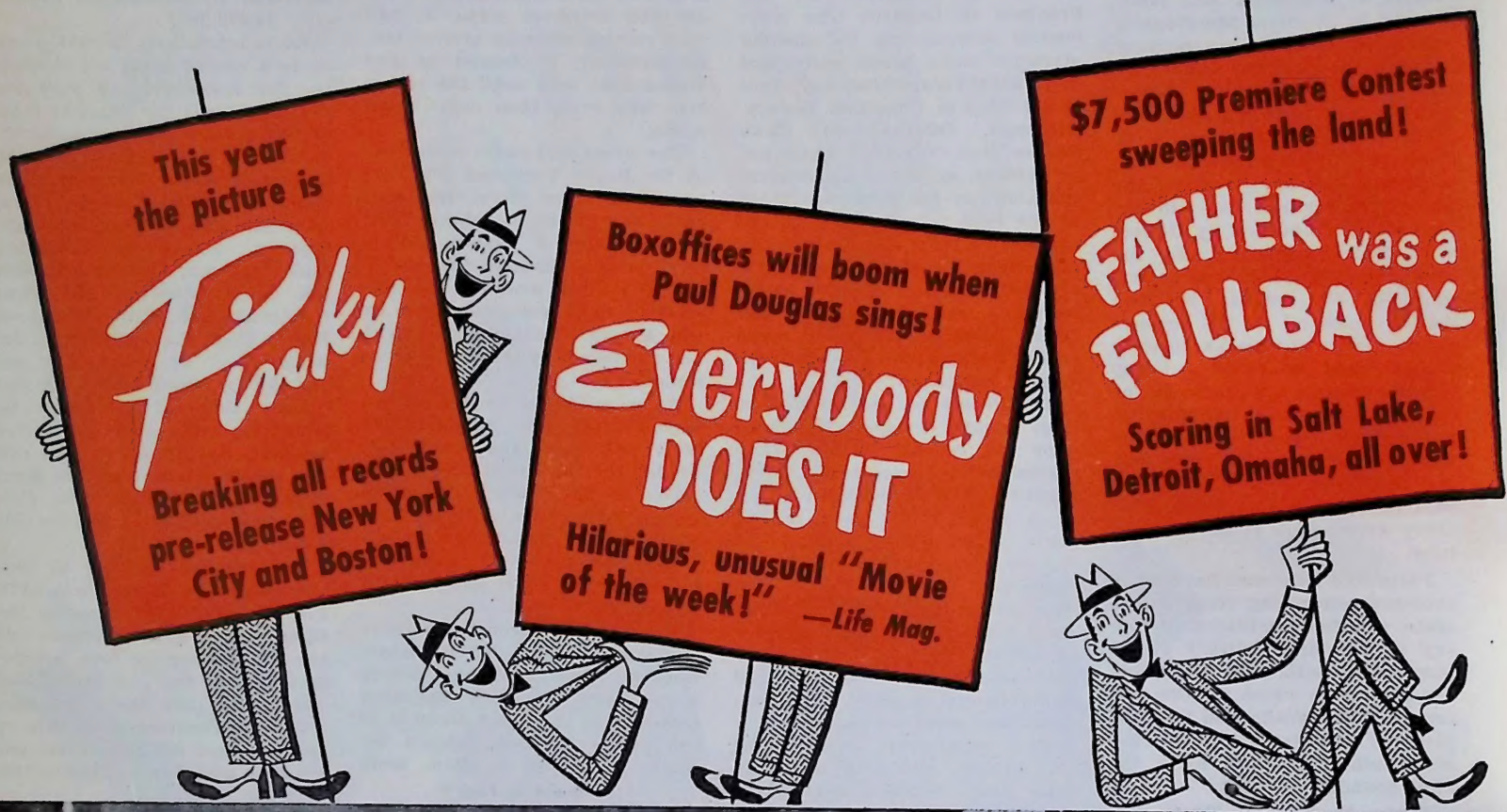


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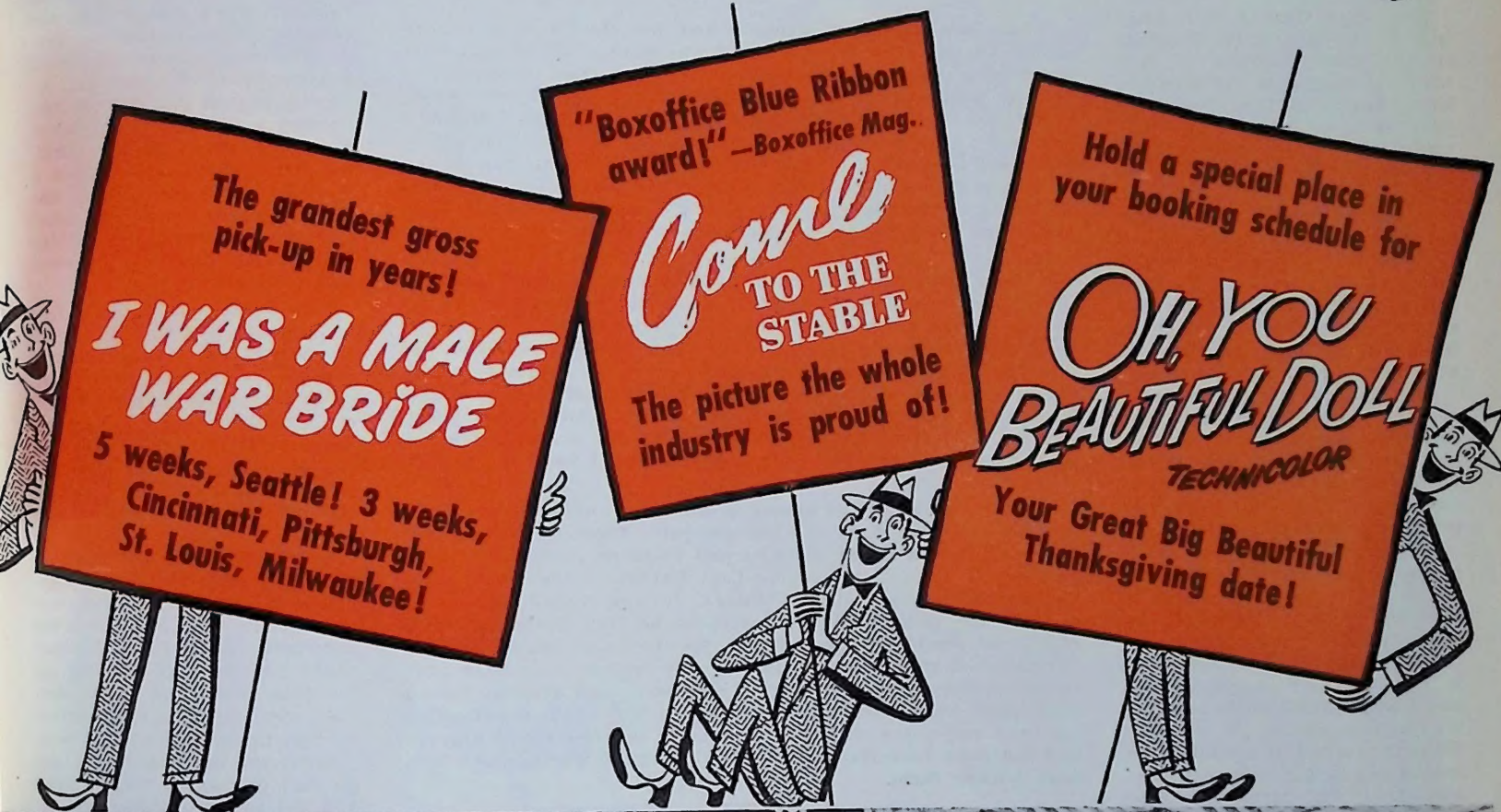
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CENTURY-FOX

R. Kershaw, 80, Passes In Vcr.

Raymond Kershaw, veteran exhibitor, died recently in Victoria, BC, after a short illness. He was 80 years old.

Coming to Canada from England at the age of 19, Kershaw entered show business in 1913 with the leasing of the Wonderland Theatre in Winnipeg. Five years later he built his own theatre, the Osborne, and in 1928 erected the Tivoli, both in Winnipeg also.

In 1929 Kershaw went into partnership with Famous Players Corporation, during the presidency of the late N. L. Nathanson, and sold out to Famous seven years later. He left Winnipeg in 1932, moving to Victoria, where he resided until his death.

For many years the president of the Manitoba Exhibitors Association, Kershaw was credited with numerous activities for the welfare of the motion picture industry and at all times tried to promote better public relations.

He was responsible for much of the army entertainment during the first World War and is believed to have originated the camp movie shows.

Kershaw brought the first movie camera to Western Canada and was the first movie cameraman in that part of the country. When he turned to exhibition he specialized in the suburban theatre field and rapidly became known across the country as a successful and wide-awake showman. One of his top ventures was the promotion of first-run British films in Winnipeg in the depression 30's, which turned out to be a tremendous success.

Mrs. Kershaw predeceased him in 1946. He is survived by his only son, Frank of Calgary, who is managing director of Western Drive-in Theatres Limited.

Columbia Sets Cast

Columbia has named John Ireland, Evelyn Keyes and William Bishop for the leads in *The Killer That Stalked New York*.

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Saw Ben Carson of Montreal and Jim Hardiman of London at the Variety show — but where was Barker Bill Singleton at the official opening of the Village? We're so used to seeing him in from Montreal for important events. However, Second Assistant Chief Barker Jack Chisholm of ASN upheld the company's standard . . . Parody: I don't want to set the world on fire, I just want to make a million dollars . . . In its long pan on the NFB, *The Financial Post* made a typo error that wasn't really one according to the paper's point of view. Once it referred to it as the "Flim Board." What happened to the "Flam?"

Lloyd Mulr, who just checked out of RKO Canadian publicity from Vancouver, used to handle Seattle and Portland across the border. George Degnon, just about the top p.a. in the Dominion, is expected to join a big industrial concern. Ed Howard of the Cleveland office will serve eastern Canada . . . Forgot to credit the architecture of the Birch Cliff, 20th Century's new ranch-house style theatre, to Kaplan & Sprachman, which is just about the No. 1 firm of theatre architects in this country. They've done dozens and are now designing drive-ins, I hear.

There was plenty of humor in connection with Variety matters which Danny Kaye did not generate. There were those exchanges between Conny Smythe and Politicos Innis and Porter over free tickets to the Maple Leaf Gardens, which took place on the rostrum at Variety Village. It was Smythe who also brought Jim Balmer back to earth as he travelled along on a cloud of sentiment caused by his reciting Edgar Guest's "Friends." Several cheques for Variety Village had been presented earlier, following suitable eloquence, and Smythe waited until Jim was through, then asked loudly and impatiently: "Haven't you got a cheque?" Balmer is an associate of Smythe and Big Boss John Harris in the Pittsburgh Hornets, which is a Leaf hockey farm.

When Danny Kaye learned at the luncheon that Henry Nathanson was a brother of his physician, the famed Dr. Nathanson of Minneapolis, he asked to meet Canada's MGM chief and they chatted for quite a while . . . Part of the delay which caused Kaye to arrive late at the Imperial was when Don Summerville, who looked after him, led him into the stage door at Massey Hall, which is down the street. Maluczynski was playing the piano onstage and it would have been funny if Kaye had walked on and joined his act. I guess Don, who runs the Prince of Wales, has been out at the East End so long that he doesn't know his way around any more.

Whatever became of that famous star of rage and scream, Cass Daley? . . . What right have Sydney Greenstreet and Francis Sullivan to go around giving fat men a bad reputation? . . . The past is making a great stand against the present on Bay Street. The old National Club, with its look of yesteryear, stands stoutly between two new ogres of stone and steel, the Woolworth and Bank of Nova Scotia buildings, which look down on it menacingly . . . Sign on lower Jarvis Street which indicates a return to the bad old days — but at modern prices: "Bunks \$1."

In Samoa Robert Louis Stevenson had moved from a hut into a big house and was depressed the first night because he had sent his servant home without ordering the cigarettes and coffee which he could not do without. As his spirits continued sinking the servant entered with the cigarettes and coffee. "Great is the forethought," Stevenson said gratefully. "Great is the love," corrected the servant.

Spanish proverb: "God gives us walnuts when we have no teeth to crack them." . . . Roscoe Collier suggests the name of "South Pacific" be changed to "Pinza Needles." . . . Brevignette: "Ritz-Raff". . . Overheard: "I work for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation" . . . "She's so ugly," spoke one acme of venomity to another, "that when she asked: 'Mirror, Mirror on the Wall' she was cut off by the mirror with 'Don't even bother asking.'"

Than, Fields Sue Renaissance

Echo of the difficulties that have beset Renaissance Films of Montreal in the last 18 months was heard in Practice Court in Montreal when Joseph Than and Leonard Fields, American producers, brought action claiming \$40,000 from Renaissance, allegedly due on four \$10,000 promissory notes given in virtue of a contract which was not fulfilled. Renaissance had entered a counter claim and Than and Fields' inscription-in-law asked that certain paragraphs of the defence be rejected. Judgment was reserved.

Suit arose out of the failure of Canadian International Screen Production as a movie-making venture. The company was formed in June, 1948, as a subsidiary of Renaissance with J. A. DeSeve, president of the parent outfit, also heading the new unit and Fields and Than accepting the positions of executive producers.

Object of the new organization was to produce 10 films in Canada in two years and a deal was entered into with Monogram for distribution of the films. Contract called for start of shooting on the first production in October, 1948, and delivery of the completed film in January of this year.

However, the picture did not go into production as scheduled and the two producers, who alleged at the time that the delay was due to DeSeve's not living up to his end of the contract, requested an extension of the deadline from Monogram, which was granted. When the second starting date passed without actual work commencing, which Than and Fields claimed was again due to the same reason, Monogram withdrew completely.

Eventually the whole project was dropped and Than and Fields returned to the USA. This brought matters to a head in the Renaissance organization and the shareholders entered a bill before the Quebec Legislature to amend the charter of the company and protect the stockholders. This was withdrawn and Paul Pratt, financier and mayor of Longueuil, assumed the presidency of the reorganized company.

With the coming of different management a new charter was applied for and Renaissance Films Distribution Incorporated became Les Productions Renaissance Incorporated, with a new capitalization of \$500,000. A continuing production program was embarked upon immediately and the first film *Le Gros Bill* is now in release. Others have since been completed and about five or six more are being prepared for the future schedule. All are in the French language.

THE STARS DECIDED TO MAKE-UP THE MAKE-UP MAN



On the **SAINTS AND SINNERS** set, Dublin's famous Abbey Players along with the blonde British menace, Christine Norden, had themselves an hilarious time shooting that merry rumpus in a modern

Irish village. **S. & S.** is a current New York laugh hit, long-run. PHOTO shows stars making-up the make-up man as his own grandmother.

London Films Presents **SAINTS AND SINNERS**. (Comedy), stars Kieron Moore, Christine Norden with Dublin's Abbey Players, Sheila Manahan, Michael Dolan, Maire O'Neill, Tom Dillon, Pam Arliss, Noel Purcell, Tony Quinn. A Leslie Arliss Production. Eagle-Lion Release.

THIS IS A VINTAGE YEAR FOR BRITISH COMEDY

BOOK IT NOW FROM EAGLE-LION

Duplessis Warns Quebec Exhibs

Quebec theatre operators will have their permits annulled if they persist in violating the law by admitting children under 16 to their theatres, Premier Maurice Duplessis, who is also Attorney-General, warned recently.

While admitting that the general situation had "improved very considerably" of recent years, Duplessis said that there had been numerous complaints and authorities had decided to take whatever action was "deemed necessary or advisable."

The Quebec law was passed after a tragic fire and panic in the Laurier Palace Theatre in Montreal on Sunday, January 9th, 1927, when 77 children lost their lives and 50 were injured. But the need for this law has long since passed, the various theatre safety laws being so uniformly strict and so well enforced by the different Provincial theatre inspection branches that the chance of another horrible tragedy occurring have been reduced to a minimum.

So much has safety become the watchword of the film industry that official government reports, available only for the last five years, show that not one life was lost in theatres in Canada in that time. The Province of Ontario, which has about one-third of all the theatres in the country, has a perfect record for safety, not one fatality ever having occurred in one of its establishments. Statistics prove that children and adults are far safer in movie theatres than on the streets or even in their own homes.

While the Quebec law prohibits children from entering a theatre at any time, it does not ban them from seeing movies in churches, parish halls, YMCA auditoriums, etc. As a result these have increased to such an extent that 104 have been listed by the federal government in a recent report. These all use 16 mm. film and, while the use of this slow-burning type of film minimizes the chances of fire, the danger of panic in these overcrowded halls is greatly increased. Cognizance of this was taken in Montreal, when a conscientious police inspector stopped such showings in "an attempt to prevent a tragedy." These halls usually charged an admission price from 15 to 20 cents and when theatre operators attempted to run matinees for children they were hauled into court and fined and even had their licenses suspended for several days.

Ruth Roman Named

Ruth Roman has been cast in Warners' *Colt 45*.



TWENTIETH CENTURY THEATRES CLUB AIDS VILLAGE

Shown here is the scene on the stage of the Victory Theatre, Toronto, as Barker James Cameron of the Variety Club of Toronto received a \$1,000 cheque in aid of Variety Village from Aubrey Lent, president of the Twentieth Century Theatres Managers Club (Toronto). The Club raised the money with a stage show.

Weingarten Signs MGM Contract

Lawrence Weingarten has been signed to a new long-term contract by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, according to a recent announcement by Louis B. Mayer and Dore Schary. In line with plans for increased production it was stated that under the terms of the new contract Weingarten will be on the studio executive staff

Popkin Plans Next

Harry Popkin, producer of *Champagne for Caesar*, which stars Ronald Colman and Celeste Holm and which will be released by United Artists, is planning a sequel to the film with the same stars.

Columbia Buys Story

Columbia has bought James Edward Grant's "Left Farrel."

USA COMPETITION

(Continued from Page 1)

nadian motion picture industry, which receives scanty support. Controlled from the USA, the bulk of the Canadian industry gets most of its film advertising from publications which originate across the line and include Canadian notes.

In Toronto the Commission was told that national magazines are "an incalculable service in development of a national spirit. Canada is the only nation in the world in which the largest percentage of reading matter is foreign controlled."

Less than one-third of the total circulation of magazines in the Dominion is of Canadian-owned publications. Of 217 magazines circulating in Canada, only 36 are published in this country.

The brief stated that since the government withdrew the tariff on USA magazines entering Canada, in 1935, their circulation has increased by 600 per cent.

The Canadian publisher must pay a tax on the paper he uses, making necessary a higher charge for his periodical, yet there is no duty on USA magazines.

The equalization of tariffs on magazines and paper on both sides of the USA-Canadian border was suggested.

MILLER RETURNED

(Continued from Page 1)

the report of President George Miller of Wynyard, who had been one of the delegates to Ottawa and was reappointed, with William Winterton of Saskatoon as alternate or observer.

Among the matters discussed was a proper category for part-time workers in the Minimum Wage Act and methods of increasing membership and attendance.

During the session Miller was re-elected president, Winterton vice-president and Jack Watson of Regina secretary-treasurer.

A panel of 15 directors was chosen, including P. W. Mahon, H. Bercovitch, F. Lindholm, R.C. Sutherland, J. Reinhorn, F. Falkner, H. Humphries, G. Bailey, B. Johnston, W. Pyle, Miss P. Durham, R. Tivey and G. M. Miller.

At the conclusion of the meeting some 40 exhibitors, wives and guests sat down to an excellent banquet in the Blue Room of the Hotel Saskatchewan. George Miller, the chairman, introduced the speakers, who were Mayor G. N. Menzies; City Commissioner G. Gillis; A. Aitken, Commissioner of the Board of Trade; Joe Huber, Winnipeg manager for 20th Century-Fox Film Corporation; and the Hon. C. C. Williams, Minister of Labor, who has jurisdiction over the film and theatre branch.

SHORT THROWS

EXEMPTION from paying income tax on union dues was asked by IATSE Local 299, Winnipeg, in an application to the Minister of National Revenue. Their request was based on a recent court case in which a local member won exemption from taxation on his 1945 fees. Application also asks that remittance be made retroactive to 1945.

GODERICH will have two theatres when the new Park is opened, H. J. Sutherland, owner of both, stated. He said that the 496-seat Capital will be kept in operation at least a year as a test to see if Goderich can support the two. At that time if the Capital is not paying its way it may be disposed of.

BOARD of Trade of Arcola, Saskatchewan, has sold the 200-seat Princess Theatre for a reported \$16,000 to Frank A. Mus of Cedoux.

MORE WOMEN on the Ontario Censor Board was asked by the Ontario Central Area Women's Institutes in a resolution passed at a recent meeting.

S. McMANUS, manager of the Odeon Theatre in Port Arthur, Ontario, was guest speaker at a recent meeting of the Lady Grey Chapter of the IODE. His subject was "What goes on behind the movie industry."

GRANDMOTHER of Yvonne de Carlo, Vancouver-born movie actress, Mrs. Margaret de Carlo passed away recently at her home in Vancouver at the age of 71.

DID YOU ever hear of a world premiere of a screening room? That's exactly what took place recently in Washington, DC, when President and Mrs. Truman were guests of the Motion Picture Association of America at the opening of its 71-seat projection room, the Academia. Other guests were members of the White House staff, the Cabinet and the heads of movie companies making up the MPA.

LUMINOUS poster advertising was the highlight of the recent Theatre Poster Service Convention at the King Edward Hotel in Toronto. This new screen-processed poster comes in three sizes — 30 x 40; 40 x 60; and 24 x 82 — and was displayed at a cocktail party by Murray L. Sweigman of Independent Poster Supply Company.

Variviews of Three-Day Whirl

FEW NOTABLES WHO have visited Toronto received the welcome Danny Kaye did at the civic reception in City Hall Square. The streets were jammed as the Variety motorcade, headed by Kaye and the only one allowed through downtown Toronto since subway construction began, arrived at the Square. Danny had his serious moments as well as funny ones on the special platform, then went into the building to sign the register. When he came out he pushed Doug Skene of Associated Screen News aside and cranked his camera at the crowd. Mayor McCallum and Controller Lampert welcomed him warmly and the cheers of the crowd was its endorsement. It reminded him, Kay said, of the "Mother Country."

VARIETY'S LUNCHEON FOR Kaye was another event that will not soon be forgotten. As Chief Barker J. J. Fitzgibbons, CBE, said: "It's easy to go off the deep end — this room is just loaded with sentiment. It's hard to know what to say. What can any man say?" All who had worked towards the opening of Variety Village, knowing that it would begin its official life as the next act on the day's program, felt as he did. "I believe it to be a miracle with all my heart," he said.

DURING THE LUNCHEON Roy Miller of St. Catharines and Jack Ward of Niagara Falls, both officials of the Niagara Peninsula theatres association, presented the Heart Fund with a cheque for \$500, the result of a raffle, and Aubrey Lent, president of the managers club of 20th Century Theatres in Toronto, turned over a cheque for \$1,000 to the Chief Barker. Morris Stein, chairman of the Heart Committee, thanked them, remarking that "It is nice to see showmen, whether in Variety or not, helping Variety Village." Both groups promised to make their donations annual.

DANNY KAYE'S ADDRESS at the luncheon was one which brought a tightening to many throats and a glisten to many eyes. After being presented with a wallet containing the first honorary membership ever issued by the Variety Club of Toronto, he spoke for a half-hour with tolerance as his theme.

This was his 23rd year in show business, he said. "I've had a great many thrills in my profession and a great many disappointments — as we all have had — but I have never had anything like this." Show business, he told the listeners, had a responsibility to the entire world. He was intensely grateful to show business for what it had brought him and he recalled his humble beginnings in Brooklyn.

"Never in my life have I been so proud of my profession. Show business has grown up, just as the world has grown up. We have voices, very strong voices, and we must use those voices to promote good." Show business was the last place in the world to find bigotry. "No one has ever been refused admission to my profession for what he was or what he believed."

At the conclusion of his remarks the Chief Barker commented: "This moment will always be one of the highlights in the history of Variety."

THE OFFICIAL OPENING of Variety Village, beginning with Lou Snyder's playing of God Save the King to the Rev. W. J. Johnston's closing prayer, will remain forever in the hearts of those who shared its creation. The first voice to be heard after that of the Chief Barker was that of Lt.-Col. G. Cherrier, a Catholic priest, who delivered the Invocation.

Hardly a human emotion remained undisturbed with the exception of hate, by what transpired during the afternoon. Conn Smythe, an unsched-

uled speaker, jostled humorously with Controller John Innis while the latter was at the microphone for the City of Toronto. The subject was, of course, those famed free hockey tickets that Conn had held back from the civic representatives. Later, when the Hon. Dana H. Porter was officially opening the school, he remarked ruefully that all the free tickets he ever got were to agricultural fairs.

Among the speakers were Reeve O. E. Crockford of Scarborough; Morris Stein, chairman of the Heart Committee, who told the story of Variety Village and thanked the architects, builders and especially Jules Wolfe, whose devotion to the task of supervising its erection won the club's gratitude; George Ebey, International Dough Guy, who said that "No tent in the history of Variety has done such an outstanding job in so short a time;" and James Balmer, International Ceremonial Barker, one of the original 11 who founded Tent No. 1 in Pittsburgh 21 years ago.

T. W. Baker, president of the Ontario Society for Crippled Children, received Variety Village from the Chief Barker and pledged it the utmost care, while Dr. W. Koerber, its principal, who introduced the staff and pupils, declared that it represents "the greatest challenge ever given the teaching profession" in that it was the first school of its kind on the continent. The most stirring moment of the afternoon occurred when the 24 pupils, at the end of their individual introductions, gave a specially-composed cheer.

The Hon. Dana H. Porter, Attorney-General and Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario, lauded Variety in declaring the school officially open, while Danny Kaye spoke directly to the children. His address, during which he emphasized how important what happened with them would be to handicapped children of the future, was broadcast over CBC and the next day hundreds of persons requested a rebroadcast.

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING addresses of the afternoon was that of Rabbi A. L. Feinberg of the Holy Blossom Temple, who spoke on the significance of such a school. It symbolized "the victory of human imagination as expressed through Variety."

Commenting on the pioneer character of the project, the rabbi said that it "united the warm heart of show business with the knowledge of the scientist." The future usefulness of the pupils was Variety's gift to Canada.

He had learned that Variety began 21 years ago, Rabbi Feinberg said. "I think that we have a right to assume that here in Variety Village the Variety Clubs have reached the fulfillment of their usefulness." Variety, like Christianity, began with the birth of a child, he noted. The benefits of the Village were open to all children, regardless of class, color or creed, and this view combined the finest that was in both Christianity and Judaism.

Rabbi Feinberg is a member of Tent 28, as are Father Cherrier, a Catholic, and the Rev. Mr. W. J. Johnston, a Protestant.

THE THEATRICAL SIDE of Variety's three-day whirl of activity was as notable a success as the opening of the Village. Kaye did 56 minutes on the stage, then addressed some serious remarks to the pupils of the school, who were in a box. The general bill was one that only Kaye could top.

WITH DANNY KAYE were Ed Dukoff, his representative; Sid Garfield of New York, wire correspondent and columnist for Warner Brothers; and Art Moger, WB's Boston publicist. They were shown around by Haskell Masters, WB Canadian chief, and Tony Ranciar, the company's Dominion publicity head.

VARIETY VILLAGE

(Continued from Page 3)

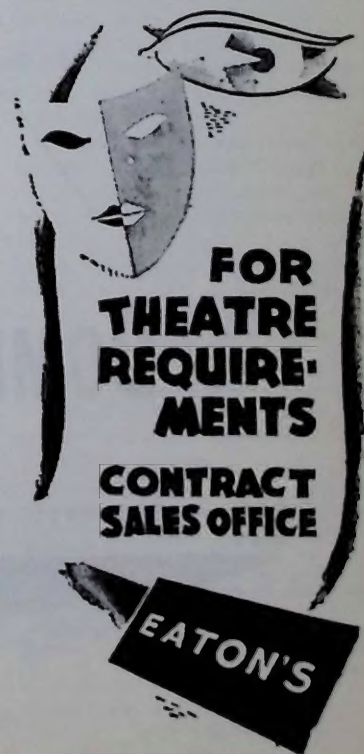
broadcast. The pupils gave a special Variety Village yell that caused the throats of the listeners to tighten.

The next night, which was part of the third day, Kaye stepped on the stage of the Imperial Theatre to follow the greatest array of talent ever offered on a Toronto stage. His performance was unforgettable. At last Toronto was seeing Kaye, the comedian — seeing him and loving him.

The performance brought Variety \$32,127.50 to add to the \$188,652.75 raised through nine prior events, all of which were held in Toronto but one, that one being a golf tournament in St. Catharines. Now that Variety Village has been opened, the showmen of various cities are desirous of participating in its maintenance by raising funds through their showmanship.

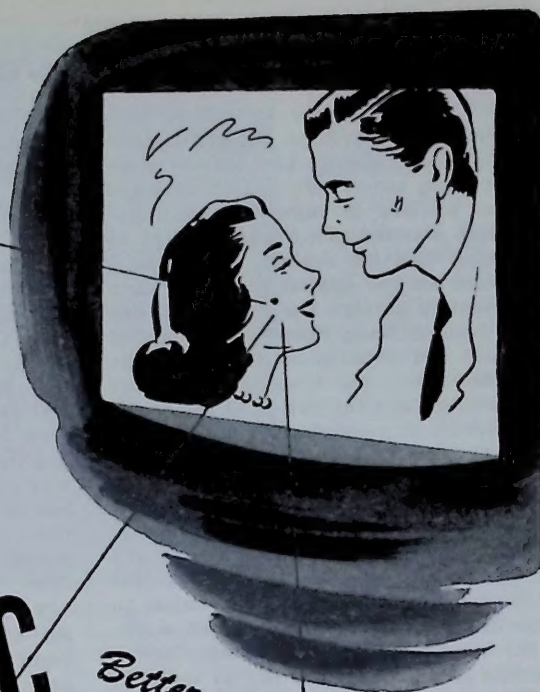
In the program Jim Nairn thanked many who helped put over the Imperial show, from Warner Bros. for its world premiere of Kaye's The Inspector General to Jack Arthur for producing the stage portion. And added: "If you haven't been mentioned here for your help with this show accept our grateful thanks, even though we failed publicly to express it."

To Variety members one of the most pleasing aspects was the smooth teamwork of the more than 70 members who co-operated to prepare the opening of the Village, in addition to those who worked on the Imperial show. It was the first time such mass effort was tried and its success gave promise of even greater accomplishments for Variety in the future.



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SCENE OF THE CRIME

with Van Johnson, Arlene Dahl, Gloria De Haven, Tom Drake.

MGM 94 Mins.

GLIB, ADULT AND CLEVER SCREENPLAY, ABLY PERFORMED, SHOULD PLACE THIS ONE IN THE SOLID REGISTER DIVISION. DIRECTION MANAGES SUSTAINED EXCITEMENT.

A glib, adult and clever screenplay by Charles Schnee capably interpreted by an alert and efficient cast should place this one from Metro plenty in the solid register division. The dialogue gives the story snappy movement and gets off more than a few nifties of an eyebrow-raising nature.

Slanting rather to the light side, the plot is not without such seriousness as brutal gangsterism, the problem of a young, married detective whose wife becomes increasingly disgusted with his devotion to a duty that hinders their connubial life. Also, there is a thought-provoking note entered into the proceedings when the head of a gambling clique decides to use his own sub rosa sleuthing methods and police technique on locating and punishing an opposite element that has decided to move in.

Scene of the Crime is a detective story that gets off to a violent start, maintains a high peak of excitement and is displayed with much movement hither and yon as the police work at length corners the killers.

Married to Arlene Dahl, Van Johnson gets his sleuthing steam up when a colleague is shot down and the killer is traced to a gang that has moved into the locality from down state. With Thomas Drake and John McIntire, Johnson assembles fragmentary clues, contacts Lloyd and meets up with a nasty assemblage of low characters ranging from specialists in stealing cars to coldblooded killers. In time they round up their quarry in a wild gun fight.

The girls in Johnson's life are alternately lovable and scheming. Gloria De Haven is a nitery stripper who leads Johnson on almost but not quite to his death. McIntire substituted for this action by Miss De Haven.

CAST: Van Johnson, Arlene Dahl, Gloria De Haven, Tom Drake, Leon Ames, John McIntire, Donald Woods.

CREDITS: Producer, Harry Rapf; Director, Roy Rowland; Screenplay, Charles Schnee; Photography, Paul C. Vogel.

DIRECTION: Very Good.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Fine.

EVERYBODY DOES IT

with Paul Douglas, Linda Darnell, Celeste Holm, Charles Coburn.

20th-Fox 98 Mins.

AN EXPLOSIVELY FUNNY NUMBER THAT BOLSTERS THE 20TH-FOX POSITION AS A COMEDY SOURCE. THOROUGHLY SATISFYING ALL THE WAY, WELL CAST AND HANDLED.

Shoring up its already strong position among the major companies in the matter of supplying the lighter and thoroughly satisfying brand of comedies, 20th-Fox this latest time around offers an explosively funny film.

Celeste Holm, wife of Paul Douglas, aspires to drown her frustrations and emerge anew on the concert stage as a singer. Douglas is in the wrecking business with Millard Mitchell and is frequently warned of what is in store for him, by Coburn, if his wife succeeds in impressing the critics. Following her recital Linda Darnell, a diva in her own right, takes an interest in Douglas which is more than artistic. He has quite a voice under his chin and she wants him to develop it and go on tour with her.

This he promptly does, incognito, explaining to Celeste that it is a business trip.

The plot frisks about in sequences that contribute much hilarity and charm to a broad plane wherein Douglas is about to go on with Miss Darnell, his operatic debut. Various well wishers have supplied him with stimulants and sedatives to allay his opening night stage fright. As a result he is quite off his tone and even his feet. At his entrance he crashes about the stage while the irate Linda tries to fill in the gaps. He proves a flop but highly comic. Miss Holm forgives him his trespassing and they save their marriage, going off to Texas with the Millard Mitchells.

CAST: Paul Douglas, Linda Darnell, Celeste Holm, Charles Coburn, Millard Mitchell, Lucile Watson, John Hoyt, George Tobias.

CREDITS: Producer, Nunnally Johnson; Director, Edmund Goulding; Screenplay, Nunnally Johnson; Based on a story by James M. Cain; Musical direction, Alfred Newman; Photography, Joseph La Shelle.

DIRECTION: Bright.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Very Good.

TOKYO JOE

with Humphrey Bogart, Alexander Knox, Florence Marly, Sessue Hayakawa.

Columbia. 88 Mins.

GOOD, GRIMACING, TOUGH BOGART. NOT ONE OF HIS BEST APPEARANCES, BUT NEVERTHELESS DELIVERS UP INTRIGUE ELEMENTS. MUCH DIALOGUE. ACTION FINISH.

As a onetime operator of a "joint" on the Ginza in Tokyo, Humphrey Bogart, as "Joe," returns to the postwar scene of his business activity to find, after a great deal of red and military tape, that it is off limits and otherwise frowned upon by the authorities as a commercial venture. Before the war, in which he became a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force and helped level Tokyo, Bogart had been married to Florence Marly, a White Russian, who was lost after Pearl Harbor.

Hayakawa and Bogart enter into a deal whereby the latter is to fly frozen frogs from Korea for eventual export to South America. On the surface the enterprise seems legitimate. Hayakawa, however has other plans like bringing back to Japan the nucleus of the Black Dragon Society to play hob with the occupation.

When Bogart meets Miss Marly, he finds she is married to Alexander Knox. Her child is his child, born the year he left to go to the wars. The military G-2, which has had Bogart under constant surveillance, is fully aware of his "business," which he does not fancy either. The night before three men in the Black Dragon are due to return to Japan Bogart makes a deal with the military. Hayakawa meanwhile has kidnapped the child, Lora Lee Michel.

Black Dragons are taken when Bogart lands them where they want to be set down—at the point of a gun. The constabulary is there, too, and it is a coup. Back in Tokyo Miss Michel is hidden in one of thousands of cellars. Bogart learns from his pal, Ito, played by Teru Shimada. Shimada does hari kari. Before dying he gives Bogart the location. He repairs there with a .45, saves the child, is himself mortally wounded.

CAST: Humphrey Bogart, Alexander Knox, Florence Marly, Sessue Hayakawa, Jerome Courtland, Gordon James, Teru Shimada.

CREDITS: A Santana Production; Producer, Robert Lord; Director, Stuart Heisler; Screenplay, Cyril Hume, Bertram Millhauser; Story, Steve Fisher; Musical score, George Antheil; Music director, M. W. Stoloff; Photography, Charles Lawton, Jr.

DIRECTION: Able.
PHOTOGRAPHY: Very Good.

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(Made in Italy — English Dialogue)

"WOMEN WITHOUT NAMES"

WITH: VALENTINA CORTESA, SIMONE SIMON, FRANCOISE ROSAY

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TORONTO STRIKE

(Continued from Page 1)

missed over the dispute, which the management claims did not concern the Casino in the least.

The union desired to have reopened contracts it holds with Theatre Holding Corporation for the Hollywood, Toronto, and the Capitol, New Toronto, to discuss the rates according to houses of certain seating capacity. The theatres concerned insisted that the scale and overtime rate was fixed by agreement and stated in the contract, and that these points were not subject to renegotiation. The contracts were signed in June of this year.

A strike was called on the theatres named in the contracts and on the Casino, for which a separate contract existed and was not in question. The Casino management was quick to point out that, while certain Theatre Holding officials were partners, it was neither controlled nor operated by Theatre Holding Corporation. The strike was, according to them, an illegal attempt to force the hand of those partners who were also interested in the Casino.

The matter came before the provincial labor department, which refused to embark on any discussion until the strikers were ordered back, the existence of a signed agreement making this necessary. The department will arbitrate, with both sides accepting its findings.

In reporting the strike the Toronto Telegram said that it was "intended as a full-length feature production" but turned into "a Grade B walkout."

Gerry Cass Named Fox Jr. Salesman

Gerry Cass has been appointed junior salesman in the Toronto branch of 20th Century-Fox by Peter Myers, branch manager.

Cass comes from a family that has long been associated with the Canadian film industry, being the eldest son of Columbia's popular Abe Cass and nephew of Garfield and Hilly Cass, MGM branch managers in Toronto and Montreal, respectively. Gerry Cass has considerable experience in the motion picture business, gained while working in the Toronto Paramount office.

NFB Hassle Heard

(Continued from Page 1)

nature of certain work made such procedure wise, the House of Commons was the scene of a lively debate as members sought further information and offered opinions.

Crawley Films and Associated Screen News, private production firms, were brought into the argument when it was revealed that the government has assigned the making of films with secret data in them. The Minister of National Defense, answering a question by R. R. Knight, CCF, said that Crawley and Associated have been screened for possible disloyalty among its employees but this was corrected later by Prime Minister St. Laurent following an enquiry by Victor Quelch, SC.

The Prime Minister said he did not know whether Crawley and Associated had screened its employees. "As far as I know," he explained, "we are relying on the firm and not upon a decision of our own."

Minister Corrects Impression

The Minister of National Defense corrected the impression that the National Film Board had at any time been stopped from making the type of film in question, or that it favored private producers because of greater security. The government had placed orders with Crawley and Associated for such films after the war, then several months ago considered switching to the National Film Board. The screening process was an automatic requirement of such a switchover. Replying to the Hon. George Drew, leader of the opposition, he said "it should be made clear" that there had been no switch from the NFB to private production.

The Financial Post story, which occupied more than a full page in the issue of November 19, was by Kenneth R. Wilson, its Ottawa correspondent, and Cyril Bassett. Headed "Film Board Monopoly Facing Major Test?", it accused the NFB of "Hollywood Ambitions" and the reader could infer that the screening of NFB personnel was an extraordinary process made necessary by conditions peculiar to that agency. D. S. Markness, PC,

based his question on this part of the story and started the controversy in the House.

"I regret that this matter has become public, not because it is embarrassing to the government, but because I think it is unfortunate that there should be any impression — and there will be such an impression — that those who are in the Board are under a cloud," the Prime Minister told the House. "I think it is unfortunate that they should be under a cloud. We are endeavoring to proceed in such a manner as to obtain certification without anyone going under a cloud. This premature publicity before we are in a position to make a positive statement that each one has been examined and that we are prepared to vouch for each one, is unfortunate."

He said that "with respect to the Film Board, we will look to the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply to say to us that he has satisfied himself that we can vouch for those from whom we get and to whom we supply secret material, that all those having access to it can be trusted."

Statement Of NFB Head

The Minister of Reconstruction and Supply, who is the Hon. R. H. Winters, is also chairman of the National Film Board and thus is its senior officer. "The mere fact that the Department of National Defense asks for a screening does not say that the Department is or is not satisfied with the security which it considers should prevail in the Film Board. The Department is simply asking that they be classified," he stated later in the discussion.

The explanation of the Minister of National Defense to the House was: "In accordance with the policy announced in the House some time ago, employees in government departments and agencies handling classified material are examined for security. Earlier this year the National Film Board was included among those departments in connection with the production and processing of service films containing classified material. This examination of security is still being proceeded with."

The policy of screening government employees engaged in confidential work was laid down by the cabinet and announced in the Commons by the then Minister of Justice, the Hon. J. L. Ilsley, in June, 1948. It was included in the administrative functions of the Deputy Minister of any department that he should make himself responsible for the "reliability of employees from a security viewpoint who might have access to confidential material."

Prominent In Newspapers

Canadian newspapers devoted much space and important positions to the NFB argument in the Commons, especially those in Toronto. The Globe and Mail heading was "Won't Depend on Film Board, Use Private Firm On Secrets," and its sister-paper the Telegram headed the story by its staff reporter, Peter Dempson, "Ottawa Not Trusting 'Core' In Film Board." The Toronto Star, a pro-government newspaper, led off its story by Robert Taylor with "R.C.M.P. Probing Staff of Film Board, Private Firm Handles Secrets."

The texts of the stories contained the explanations of the cabinet ministers that security screenings were not confined to the NFB.

The Board's name came into the spy trials when Freda Linton secretary to its former chief, John Grierson, was described as disloyal and could not be found at the time. Later she surrendered and was dismissed by a magistrate who could find no reason for holding her. In the Globe and Mail Warren Baldwin, its Ottawa reporter, recalled that "Grierson himself testified before the Kellock Commission that Miss Linton had been with him for less than a year and other evidence indicated that the Soviet leaders of the spy ring had not considered the Film Board a fruitful spot to keep an agent."

Shooting Started On UA's 'San Lorenzo'

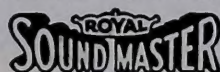
Final Casting for San Lorenzo, latest of the Cisco Kid film adventures produced by Philip N. Krasne for United Artists release has been completed, and the film has gone before the cameras at Pioneertown, Calif. Derwin Abraham is directing.

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